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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

July 13, 2009

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The Honorable Barack H. Obama
The President
The White House
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write today to request that senior officials from both the State Department and the National Security Council promptly meet with prominent Chinese dissident and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Rebiya Kadeer, to discuss the recent violence in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

My office has received reports which indicate that despite the recent lull in violence, the situation in Xinjiang remains precarious. Official reports by the Chinese government indicate that the violence has claimed 183 lives. Radio Free Asia reported that "XUAR Governor Nur Bekri explicitly blamed the clashes on Kadeer" and "Chinese authorities have accused her repeatedly of fomenting separatism among Uyghurs." This allegation is inconsistent with Ms. Kadeer's longstanding record of calling for nonviolent protest.

The official Chinese media's biased coverage of the events in Xinjiang have heightened Han nationalism and served to augment tensions between Han Chinese and Uyghurs. While President Hu assured the international community that the situation is under control, mobs of angry Han Chinese continued to roam the streets of the capital city of Urumqi and attack Uyghurs while security forces stood idly by. Countless Uyghur men residing in Urumqi have been arrested and taken from their homes by security forces to be detained at locations unknown to their families.

I sincerely hope that this administration will not accede to any pressure the Chinese government will undoubtedly exert in an effort to discourage officials from meeting with Ms. Kadeer. The Chinese government has verbally harassed my own office staff on multiple occasions because of my invitations to Ms. Kadeer to speak on Capitol Hill regarding the well-documented persecution of the Uyghurs in China.

Should senior officials at the State Department and the White House decline to meet with Ms. Kadeer, such actions would be reminiscent of 1975 when famed Soviet dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn visited Washington and the city's foreign policy establishment sought to obstruct him at every turn. He was refused a meeting with President Ford, who declined to meet with him fearing it would sour an upcoming meeting with Soviet leader Brezhnev. When Solzhenitsyn

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
July 13, 2009
Page 2

delivered a major speech at the AFL-CIO, State Department employees were forbidden from attending.

I urge you not to repeat that mistake and shun the woman which *The Washington Post* referred to as the "mother of the Uyghur movement."

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to your prompt response to this request.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress

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